

In Plot On Hitler, Now N. J. Pastor

Special to the Herald Tribune

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Franz von Hammerstein, thirty-two, a member of the von Stauffenberg plot to kill Hitler in 1944, began his work here today as associate pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Perth Amboy.

Mr. Hammerstein arrived in New York yesterday aboard the North German Lloyd's liner Gripsholm with his wife, Vreni, thirty, and their only child, Adrian, six months. They will be in this country three years under a minister exchange program of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

Arrested in 1944

While waiting for immigration clearance upon his arrival yesterday, Mr. Hammerstein told of his arrest in 1944 after the plot on Hitler's life failed when a heavy table top shielded the German dictator from the blast of a time bomb on July 20, 1944.

After the incident the Gestapo arrested thousands of suspects and their relatives. Among them, Mr. Hammerstein related, were he, his mother and his sister. After several months in the Gestapo's prison in Berlin, Mr. Hammerstein was transferred to the notorious Buchenwald concentration camp and later to Dachau. He was liberated May 7, 1945, by American troops.

Mr. Hammerstein explained that he decided against a career in law in favor of the ministry while in the Gestapo prison in Berlin. He began work toward that goal as soon as he regained his freedom at the end of the war.

Second U. S. Visit

This is Mr. Hammerstein's second visit to the United States. He first came here in 1948 to attend the University of Chicago Divinity School and Howard University in Washington. Before returning the second time, he served as an assistant pastor in West Berlin, where he was formerly assistant to Bishop Otto Dibelius of the German Evangelical Church. He is a graduate of the University of Goettingen and Bethel Theological Seminary in Germany.



The Rev. Franz von
Hammerstein.

Yesterday, Dr. Andrew Sebben, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, introduced Mr. Hammerstein to his congregation, and the new associate pastor officially began his work by reading the Scriptures.

Except for a cold which he got waiting for his baggage at the pier yesterday, Mr. Hammerstein said he was happy about his first day as a minister here. He is scheduled to assist Dr. Sebben in parish calling, work with men and young people, recruit new members to the 900-member congregation and minister to industrial workers in the community. He and Mrs. Hammerstein will make their home at 88 Market St. in a five-room apartment provided by the First Presbyterian Church.

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